

**PETITION OF APPEAL**

TO: STATE POLICE COMMISSION  
7979 INDEPENDENCE BLVD  
2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR STATE POLICE COMMISSION  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804-9111

BY: TROOPER JOSEPH JONES  
120 MATT ROAD  
STERLINGTON, LOUISIANA 71280  
(318) 527-1718

RECEIVED  
NOV 01 2017

State Police Commission

The Petition of Appeal, through undersigned counsel, of Joseph Jones, with respect, represents:

1.

Appellant was employed by the State of Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, Public Safety Services. He serves with permanent status in the classification of Trooper. Appellant has over three years of State service.

2.

Appellant files this appeal pursuant to Chapter 13 of the State Police Civil Service Rules.

3.

By letter dated October 16, 2017, Appellant was given a 40 hour suspension. A copy of the letter of suspension is attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

4.

Appellant denies the allegations as written in the letter of suspension. Appellant avers that the disciplinary action imposed is unwarranted and unjustified.

5.

Appellant avers that the letter of discipline fails to contain the detail and specificity required by Chapter 12 of State Police Civil Service Rules. The violations alleged are vague and indefinite.

6.

Appellant shows that he acted, at all times, in accordance with his training, experience and knowledge.

7.

Appellant avers that the penalty meted is too severe.

8.

Appellant was advised sometime after midnight on April 15, 2017 that his son was severely beaten by Jack Goode, the Sterlington High football coach.

9.

Appellant was off duty and had been fishing that day.

10.

Appellant did not interfere with a lawful arrest.

11.

Appellant was upset that a high school football coach would provide liquor to and fight with students. His son had cuts, bruises, marks on his neck and his chin was bleeding when he arrived at the scene.

12.

The coach had provided beer to his 16 year old minor son, dared him to chug vodka and called him a “pussy” for not chugging the vodka in an obvious intent to intimidate the child. His son relented to Goode’s insistence and chugged vodka until he threw up.

13.

On information and based on what was told to him sometime during the incident, Chandler had left the Goode home. Goode tracked him in his golf cart and demanded he come back with him to his house. Coach Goode resumed fighting with Chandler. Goode got on top of Chandler in a ditch and again started hitting him about the head, face, neck and upper body.

14.

Other teenagers arrived and had to pull Coach Goode off of Chandler as Goode screamed he was going to kill Chandler.

15.

Appellant felt his response was appropriate to the circumstances created by Coach Goode. At no time was he acting in his capacity as State Trooper, but rather in his capacity as a father.

Coach Goode's behavior was reckless and unacceptable, and appellant attempted to address the issue so as to understand why a man in Goode's position would treat children in the manner that he did.

**RELIEF REQUESTED:**

- 1) Rescission of the disciplinary action;
- 2) Alternatively, reduction of the penalty imposed to a Letter of Caution;
- 3) Expungement of appellant's personnel record; and
- 4) Reasonable attorney fees.

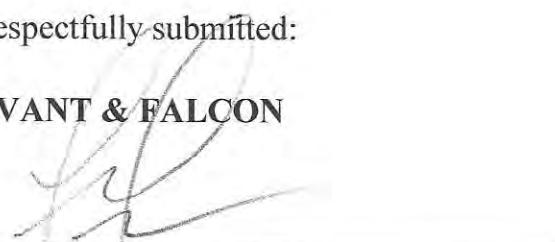
**WHEREFORE**, Joseph Jones prays that this Petition of Appeal be deemed good and sufficient and after all legal delays and due proceedings are had, that the relief requested hereinabove be granted.

Appellant further prays for all general and equitable relief.

LAW OFFICES  
AVANT & FALCON  
P. O. BOX 2667  
BATON ROUGE, LA 70821  
TELEPHONE (225) 387-4462

Respectfully submitted:

**AVANT & FALCON**

BY: 

Floyd J. Falcon, Jr., #5424  
429 Government Street  
Post Office Box 2667  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821  
Telephone: (225) 387-4462



**JOHN BEL EDWARDS**  
GOVERNOR

**KEVIN W. REEVES, COLONEL**  
DEPUTY SECRETARY

**State of Louisiana**  
**Department of Public Safety and Corrections**  
**Public Safety Services**

OCOTBER 16, 2017  
4750/0501/MMG/17-20497  
HQ-01-058

*Rec'd  
10/19*

**TROOPER JOSEPH JONES**  
TROOP F

IA#17-013; OLA# 053787  
VIA PERSONAL DELIVERY

**RECEIVED**

**RE: 40 HOUR SUSPENSION**

NOV 01 2017

Dear Trooper Jones:

**State Police Commission**

Your response to the intended suspension letter delivered to you has been received by me. Your response has been thoroughly considered. I have considered your actions from the perspective of a parent, but also considered your actions from the perspective of a Louisiana State Trooper. You knew that local law enforcement was responding to the incident and actively investigating the allegations. You encouraged a suspect to engage in a physical altercation with you to avoid being arrested. Your actions fell below the standards expected of a State Trooper and I find that the proposed suspension is warranted.

In accordance with State Police Commission Rules 12.1 and 12.2, you are hereby notified that you are being suspended from duty for 40 hours without pay and allowances. Your suspension will begin at 1800 hours on October 23, 2017, and will end at 2200 hours on October 28, 2017, at which time you shall report back to your assigned duty station. You are suspended for the following reasons:

On April 15, 2017, sometime after midnight, you were contacted by Corporal Russell Buntyn (then Sergeant) of the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's Office (OPSO) and advised that his daughter had informed him that your 16 year old son had been "beat up" by the Sterlington High School football coach, Jack Goode. You advised Cpl. Buntyn that you would handle the matter.

At approximately 0150 hours, you contacted your wife, Haley Jones, a Ouachita Parish Sheriff's deputy, who was on duty at the time, to notify her of the situation. You told Deputy Jones that your son's phone was going straight to voicemail and that you wanted to contact both your son and the coach to determine what happened. Deputy Jones then contacted Cpl. Buntyn who was off duty at the time, and asked him to locate

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DPSSP 4117

Trooper Jones  
October 16, 2017  
Page 2

you because you had been drinking and she didn't want you to do anything to get into trouble. Deputy Jones advised Cpl. Buntny that you were somewhere in Frenchmen's Bend. Deputy Jones then advised OPSO Captain Michael Judd of the situation, who sent Cpl. Jerry Benson and Cpl. Justin Cromwell to the Goode residence.

Cpl. Buntny contacted you via phone and told you not to drive. You advised him you weren't driving, but you were in your truck. You advised Louisiana State Police Internal Affairs (LSP IA) investigators<sup>1</sup> that you had your neighbor drive you to locate your son because you had consumed eight to ten beers about three to four hours prior to receiving Cpl. Buntny's initial call about the incident. Cpl. Buntny located you on East Frenchmen's Bend Road and noted in a written report that he submitted to OPSO that you appeared to have been drinking. He further advised LSP IA investigators that he could smell alcohol inside his truck while you were in it.

You and Corporal Buntny located your son at a bonfire and spoke to him and other teens present about the incident. At approximately 0215 hours, Cpl. Buntny notified Deputy Jones via text that he was with you on Lonewa Rd. checking on your son and that you wanted to go to Mr. Goode's residence to confront him about the incident. Deputy Jones advised Cpl. Buntny that Cpls. Benson and Cromwell were on the way to your location. Cpl. Buntny advised Deputy Jones to hurry due to you wanting to confront Mr. Goode.

At 0233 hours, Cpl. Buntny advised Deputy Jones that you two had arrived at Mr. Goode's residence. Cpl. Cromwell and his trainee, Deputy Jason Elee, arrived on the scene shortly thereafter and saw you standing under the open carport as Cpl. Buntny attempted to make contact with Mr. Goode. Cpl. Benson arrived shortly thereafter. Mr. Goode and his wife exited the rear door of the residence.

Mr. and Mrs. Goode advised investigators that you got right in Mr. Goode's face while asking if he knew who you were and who your son was. Mr. Goode recalled that you told him, "I know you put your hands on my kid. Tell me you put your hands on my kid!" Mr. Goode advised that you remained close to his face and told him, "We'll handle this like men," and pointed toward the backyard. You stood over Mr. Goode in an attempt to intimidate him and entice him to fight. As you told Mr. Goode you knew what he did, Mr. Goode tried to explain what happened and you repeatedly cut him off. You told Mr. Goode if he wasn't going to "handle it" by fighting, then you were going to let the deputies arrest him. Mr. Goode explained that you motioned to one of the deputies,

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<sup>1</sup> You were interviewed by LSP IA investigators Sgt. Robert Grimes and M/T Kevin Ducote on June 15, 2017.

Trooper Jones  
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identified as Deputy Elee<sup>2</sup>, who then placed Mr. Goode in handcuffs. Ms. Goode's recollection of the incident was very similar and she added that you used profanity while screaming at her husband.

Cpl. Cromwell advised LSP IA investigators that while he was speaking to Mr. Goode, you walked over and asked Mr. Goode, "Did you put your hands on my son?" You asked Mr. Goode the question an additional four to five times, getting louder each time. He related you reached a "pretty good holler," and stood within one foot of Mr. Goode while doing so and described your demeanor as being "disgruntled and aggressive," "squared off shoulder to shoulder" with Mr. Goode. Cpl. Cromwell further advised that each time Mr. Goode did not answer the way you wanted him to, you interrupted and repeated the question louder. Cpl. Cromwell heard you tell Mr. Goode that you would not pursue charges and he would not have to go to jail if he would "handle it like a man" in the yard. At this point, the deputies were actively trying to get you away and you complied after being told to stop a couple of times. Cpl. Cromwell recalled that you are much larger than Mr. Goode and towered over him while talking to him in an aggressive tone. Cpl. Cromwell acknowledged that he was advised prior to going to the Goode residence that you had been drinking, and based on his law enforcement experience he could tell you had been drinking.

The above descriptions of your actions are corroborated by your statements you made to LSP IA investigators during your recorded interview. You admitted to confronting Mr. Goode at his house and offering him an opportunity to either engage in a physical confrontation with him or be arrested. You admitted that you raised your voice when you told Mr. Goode you would not pursue charges if Mr. Goode wanted to go into the field and "put his hands on a real man." You admitted to standing within approximately one foot of Mr. Goode's face while speaking to him. You acknowledged that you may have pointed at Mr. Goode, and admitted cursing when you asked him if he put his hands on your "fucking kid." You related that your intent was not to intimidate Mr. Goode; rather you wanted him to know you were mad, and to give him an "opportunity." You acknowledged during this interview that Mr. Goode knew you were a trooper, admitted that you asked him, "You know who I am right," and Mr. Goode acknowledged he did. You then asked Mr. Goode, "You know what I do for a living," and Mr. Goode acknowledged he did. You admitted to IA investigators that you had been drinking earlier that evening. When IA investigators asked you if you felt intoxicated or impaired at all while at the Goode's residence you responded, "I may have been a little, but not enough to say that I was highly intoxicated or even intoxicated." IA investigators asked if it would be fair to say that you felt the effects of the alcohol you'd consumed, but would not classify your condition as being "highly intoxicated," and you responded, "Yes."

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that your brother, Trooper Matt Jones, is Deputy Elee's wife's step-father.

Trooper Jones  
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Page 4

By going to Mr. Goode's residence on April 15, 2017, and confronting him about an incident that OPSO was investigating, you violated Louisiana State Police Policy and Procedure No. 901 – Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 22 – Interference, which states in pertinent part:

...

- iii. A commissioned officer shall not interfere or intervene in any lawful arrest or prosecution brought by another officer of the Office or by any other agency or person unless requested to do so by said agency or person.

...

By confronting Mr. Goode during a law enforcement investigation, while you were feeling the effects of alcohol, and attempting to entice Mr. Goode, who knew you were a state trooper, to engage in a physical altercation with you to avoid being arrested, you violated Louisiana State Police Policy and Procedure No. 901 – Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 4 – Conduct Unbecoming an Officer, which states in pertinent part:

- i. A commissioned officer shall conduct himself at all times, both on and off-duty, in such a manner as to reflect most favorably on himself and the Department.
- ii. Unbecoming conduct is defined as conduct which:
  - a) Brings the Department or any of its subdivisions into disrepute.
  - b) Reflects discredit upon the officer as a member of the Department.
- iii. May reasonably be expected to destroy public respect for State Police Officers and/or confidence in the Office of State Police.

Any future violations of this or any nature may result in more severe discipline, up to and including termination.

You have the right to appeal this action to the Louisiana State Police Commission. The time limits and procedure for appealing are contained in Chapter 13 of the State Police Commission Rules. A copy of Chapter 13 can be obtained from the State Police Commission. Their current mailing address is P.O. Box 66555, Baton Rouge, LA 70896-6555. Their current telephone number is (225) 925-7057 and their fax number is (225) 925-7058.

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Your attention is directed to Louisiana State Police Policy and Procedure Order No. 201.5.iv, which states:

iv) No officer shall work escorts, paid off-duty details, or overtime in any pay period wherein he has taken leave without pay, been suspended without pay, placed on forced or administrative leave, or worked at a reduction in pay as a result of a disciplinary action unless authorized by the appointing authority.

Sincerely,  


Colonel Kevin Reeves  
Superintendent, Louisiana State Police

c: Lt. Col. Mike Noel  
Lt. Col. David Staton  
Major Jay D Olyphant  
Captain Tommy Lewis  
Internal Affairs  
Office of Legal Affairs  
Human Resources Management

Recess at 11:00 A.M.; Chairman Simien called the meeting back to order at 11:12 A.M.

**SCHEDULED TO BEGIN AT 9:00 A.M.:**

3. In the matter of Trooper Joseph Jones (Department of Public Safety and Corrections, Office of State Police), Docket No. 17-237-S. Floyd Falcon representing the appellant and Ron Crouch representing the appellee.
  - a. Public hearing  
Mr. Floyd Falcon, legal counsel representing the appellant, and Mr. Ron Crouch, legal counsel representing the Department of Public Safety (DPS), appeared before the Commission to argue motions.

Recess at 12:02 P.M.; Chairman Simien called the meeting back to order at 12:42 P.M.

Recess at 1:49 P.M.; Chairman Simien called the meeting back to order at 2:01 P.M.

Recess at 2:15 P.M.; Chairman Simien suggested that the parties take a 30-minute recess and go over this matter once more. Chairman Simien called the meeting back to order at 2:26 P.M. when the parties did not reach an agreement.

- b. Executive Session to discuss investigative proceedings regarding allegations of misconduct  
On motion duly made by Chairman Simien, seconded, and unanimously passed, the Commission voted to go into Executive Session to discuss allegations of misconduct relative to Trooper Joseph Jones at 2:27 P.M.

**Roll Call Vote:**

In Favor: Jared Caruso-Riecke, Vice-Chairman Crawford, Harold Pierite, Sr., Jeffrey Foss, Leonard Knapp, and Chairman Simien

Opposed: None

On motion duly made by Mr. Riecke, seconded, and unanimously passed, the Commission voted to end Executive Session at 2:52 P.M.

**Roll Call Vote:**

In Favor: Jared Caruso-Riecke, Vice-Chairman Crawford, Harold Pierite, Sr., Jeffrey Foss, Leonard Knapp, and Chairman Simien

Opposed: None

- c. Public discussion of appeal and vote

Lenore Feeney read into the record the charge that Trooper Joseph Jones violated Louisiana State Police Policy and Procedure No. 901 – Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 22 – Interference.

Lenore Feeney read into the record the charge that Trooper Joseph Jones violated Louisiana State Police Policy and Procedure No. 901 – Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 4 – Conduct Unbecoming an Officer.

On motion duly made by Mr. Riecke, seconded, and unanimously passed, the Commission voted to enter into public discussion of the charge that Trooper Joseph Jones violated LSP Policy and Procedure No. 901, Sections 22 & 4.

Following public discussion, on motion duly made by Mr. Knapp and seconded, the Commission voted on whether or not there was a violation by Trooper Joseph Jones of Louisiana State Police Policy and Procedure Order No. 901, Section 22:

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Yes:** Vice-Chairman Crawford, Jeffrey Foss, Leonard Knapp, and Chairman Simien

**No:** Jared Caruso-Riecke and Harold Pierite

On motion duly made by Mr. Riecke and seconded, the Commission voted on whether or not to rescind the 40-hour suspension imposed by the Appointing Authority:

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Yes:** Jared Caruso-Riecke, Vice-Chairman Crawford, Harold Pierite, Jeffrey Foss, Leonard Knapp, and Chairman Simien

**No:** none

On motion duly made by Mr. Riecke and seconded, the Commission voted on whether or not to issue a Letter of Reprimand:

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Yes:** Jared Caruso-Riecke and Harold Pierite

**No:** Vice-Chairman Crawford, Jeffrey Foss, Leonard Knapp, and Chairman Simien

On motion duly made by Mr. Knapp and seconded, the Commission voted on whether or not to impose a 12-hour suspension:

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Yes:** Vice-Chairman Crawford, Jeffrey Foss, Leonard Knapp, and Chairman Simien

**No:** Jared Caruso-Riecke and Harold Pierite

On motion duly made by Mr. Riecke, seconded, and unanimously passed, the Commission voted to draft a letter to the Ouachita Parish School Board to convey the concerns of the Commission regarding details learned during the course of this appeal.

4. Other Commission Business

No Commission business at this time.



## State Police Commission

Post Office Box 66555  
Baton Rouge, LA. 70896-6555  
Phone (225) 925-7057  
Fax (225) 925-7058  
[www.laspc.com](http://www.laspc.com)

John Bel Edwards  
Governor

Jason Hannaman  
Executive Director

Mr. Jerry R. Hicks, President  
Ouachita Parish School Board  
100 Bry Street  
Monroe, LA 71201

August 24, 2018

Dear Mr. Hicks:

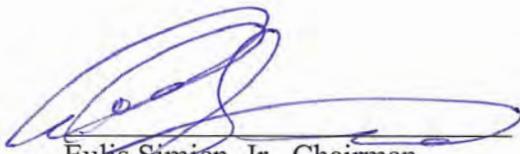
The Louisiana State Police Commission sends this letter as an expression of its concern over the School Board's hiring of Jack Goode to teach at West Monroe High School. The Commission was shocked to learn that the Ouachita Parish School Board continues to employ Jack Goode as a teacher, and that Mr. Goode continues to have power and authority over minors after abusing the trust that the citizens of this state have placed in their teachers.

On Thursday, August 9, 2018, the Louisiana State Police Commission held its monthly meeting in Monroe and heard the disciplinary appeal of Trooper Joseph Jones. Trooper Jones was disciplined for intervening in an investigation by the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's Department of Sterlington High School coach and teacher, Jack Goode. As you are aware Mr. Goode had served alcohol to or condoned the consumption of alcohol in his home by minors on the night of this incident, including to Trooper Jones' sixteen-year-old son. Further, Mr. Goode had threatened and struck Trooper Jones' son. Despite these extenuating circumstances and the fact that we thought Trooper Jones acted with greater restraint than many parents would have under the circumstances, we still thought discipline of the Trooper was in order for a violation of State Police policies. As such, we fulfilled our duty in imposing discipline. Yet, despite the horrendous conduct of Mr. Goode, we understand that he is still employed by the School Board and still has access to and authority over other minors in your school system.

Testimony at the hearing revealed that in April, 2017, Mr. Goode supplied teenagers with alcohol at his home, forced Trooper Jones' son to drink vodka, causing him to throw up, called Trooper Jones' son an expletive for initially refusing the vodka and for not being able to hold his liquor, struck Trooper Jones' son about the face, neck, chest and back on at least two different occasions, and threatened to kill him. Mr. Goode's wife, Emily Goode, a teacher at Sterlington High School, was at their home at this time. After the children escaped Mr. Goode's home and returned to a party with a number of other teenagers, Mr. Goode went to the party and threatened all of the teenagers there until his wife was able to convince him to leave and she drove him back home. Further testimony also revealed that on other occasions Mr. Goode made some of the teenagers run errands for him during the school day and was apparently a known source of alcohol

for the teenagers on his football team. Shockingly, we understand that Mr. Goode was allowed to plead guilty to simple battery of Trooper Jones' son and the additional charge related to providing alcohol to the minors was dropped. Despite the facts in this case and the agreement that Mr. Goode would not return to Sterlington, he was hired to teach (and is currently teaching) at West Monroe High School.

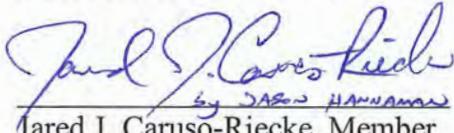
This Commission is appalled that this School Board continues to employ Jack Goode in such a capacity after the events that occurred in April, 2017, and it continues to allow Mr. Goode to work as a teacher of minor children at West Monroe High School.



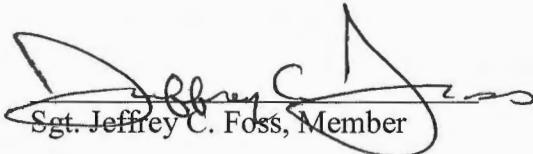
Eulis Simien, Jr., Chairman



Chief Harold Pierite, Sr., Member

  
by JASON HANNAHAN

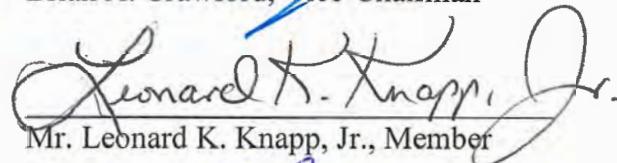
Jared J. Caruso-Riecke, Member



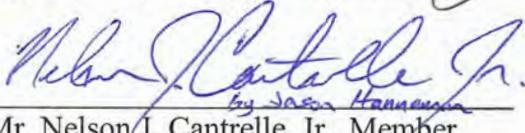
Sgt. Jeffrey C. Foss, Member



Brian A. Crawford, Vice-Chairman



Mr. Leonard K. Knapp, Jr., Member

  
by JASON HANNAHAN

Mr. Nelson J. Cantrelle, Jr., Member

cc: Gov. John Bel Edwards  
John White, State Superintendent of Education  
Tommy Comeaux, Member of Ouachita Parish School Board  
Scott Robinson, Member of Ouachita Parish School Board  
A.R. "Red" Sims, Member of Ouachita Parish School Board  
Rev. John Russell, Member of Ouachita Parish School Board  
Carey Walker, Member of Ouachita Parish School Board  
Greg Manley, Vice President and Member of Ouachita Parish School Board



## State Police Commission

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John Bel Edwards  
Governor

Jason Hannaman  
Executive Director

November 8, 2018

In Re: Appeal of Joseph Jones  
(Department of Public Safety and Corrections,  
Office of State Police)

State of Louisiana  
State Police Commission  
Docket No. 17-237-S

### NOTICE OF DECISION

To: Colonel Kevin W. Reeves  
Post Office Box 66614  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70896

Ms. Ron Crouch  
Post Office Box 66614  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70896

Ms. Ginger Krieg  
Post Office Box 66614  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70896

Mr. Floyd J. Falcon, Jr.  
Avant & Falcon  
P.O. Box 2667  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821

Joseph Jones  
120 Matt Road  
Sterlington, Louisiana 71280

Lenore Feeney  
Taylor, Porter, Brooks  
& Phillips  
P.O. Box 2471  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821

Dear Gentlemen and/or Mesdames:

You are hereby served with a copy of the decision in the above case in which you are an attorney of record or in which you are a party. Your attention is invited to Rule III of the Uniform Rules of the Courts of Appeal and to Article X, Section 50 of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974.

Pursuant to State Police Commission Rule 13.16(a), if judicial review of this decision is sought, the party requesting a transcript shall be responsible for paying the costs of transcription. Notice of estimated costs will be sent in accordance with Article 2126 of the LSA Code of Civil Procedure and payment shall be made in accordance therewith.

If you have been reinstated to your position, State Police Commission Rule 13.27(a) requires, among other things, that you present yourself ready for work at the time and place of your previous employment within fifteen (15) calendar days following the date of this decision. Failure to do so may result in you being terminated for job abandonment. Consult State Police Commission rule 13.27 for your additional responsibilities and more details.

I hereby certify this notice and a copy of the decision were mailed to the above-listed attorneys and/or parties this 8<sup>th</sup> day of **NOVEMBER 2018**

Sincerely,



Jason Hannaman  
Executive Director

Attachment

.....**DECISION**.....

.....Dated: November 8, 2018.....

..... Filed: 11-8-2018 .....

In Re: Appeal of Joseph Jones  
(Department of Public Safety and Corrections,  
Office of State Police) State of Louisiana  
State Police Commission  
Docket No. 17-237-S

**STATEMENT OF THE APPEAL**

Joseph Jones ("Appellant") is employed by the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, Office of State Police, as a Trooper with permanent status.

By letter dated October 16, 2017, over the signature of Colonel Kevin Reeves, Superintendent, Louisiana State Police, Trooper Jones received notice that he was suspended for forty (40) hours without pay and allowances, and that his suspension would begin at 1800 hours on October 23, 2017, and end at 2200 hours on October 28, 2017. As cause for the discipline, the letter states that Trooper Jones violated Louisiana State Police ("LSP") Policy and Procedure No. 901 – Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 22 (iii) Interference, and LSP Policy and Procedure No., 901-Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 4 (i), (ii) (a,b,e) – Conduct Unbecoming an Officer.

Trooper Jones filed a timely appeal with the State Police Commission ("the Commission) on November 1, 2017, challenging the findings and sufficiency of the letter of discipline. In his appeal, Appellant seeks to have the suspension rescinded and his record expunged, or in the alternative, that if any action is taken that the action be limited to the issuance of a Letter of Caution. Appellant also seeks attorney fees.

A public hearing of this appeal was held before the State Police Commission in Monroe, Louisiana on August 9, 2018.

Considering the evidence, the law and argument of the parties, and pursuant to Article 10, Section 50 of the Louisiana Constitution, the Commission makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law:

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. Trooper Joseph Jones was advised sometime after midnight on April 15, 2017 that his son, Chandler, had been allegedly assaulted by Sterlington High School football coach, Jack Goode. At this time and at all pertinent times, Trooper Jones was not on duty.
2. After receiving the call about an alleged assault of his son, Trooper Jones asked a neighbor to drive him to locate his son as Trooper Jones had been drinking. Trooper Jones was able to locate his son at a bonfire and determine that he appeared to have been in a scuffle but was not significantly injured, and that he had minor scratches and bruising.

3. Chandler advised Trooper Jones that Coach Goode had coerced him into drinking vodka, and threatened Chandler when he vomited from drinking vodka. Chandler also told Trooper Jones that Coach Goode punched him in the face and beat him about his neck area.
4. Trooper Jones was aware that the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's office had been notified of the alleged assault and that deputies were on their way to Coach Goode's residence.
5. Despite this knowledge, after Trooper Jones had determined that his son was not seriously injured, Trooper Jones went to Coach Jack Goode's residence to confront him about the alleged assault of his son.
6. Ouachita Parish Sheriff deputies arrived after Trooper Jones did and ordered Coach Goode to come outside. Within the hearing of Trooper Jones, a Ouachita Parish Sheriff's Deputy read Coach Goode his rights and Corporal Cromwell questioned Coach Goode outside his residence.
7. At some point after Corporal Cromwell began questioning Coach Goode, Trooper Jones stepped between Corporal Cromwell and Coach Goode and began asking repeatedly whether Coach Goode had put his hands on his son and invited him to settle the matter "like men" and he would not press charges.
8. During Trooper Jones verbal confrontation with Coach Goode, the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's office placed handcuffs on Coach Goode and then drove away with Coach Goode.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Appointing Authority alleged in the Letter of Discipline that Trooper Jones violated LSP Policy and Procedure No. 901- Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 22-Interference, by going to Coach Goode's residence on April 15, 2017, and confronting him about an incident that the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's Office was investigating. This Rule provides in pertinent part:

iii. A commissioned officer shall not interfere or intervene in any lawful arrest or prosecution brought by another officer of the Office or by any other agency or person unless requested to do so by said agency or person.

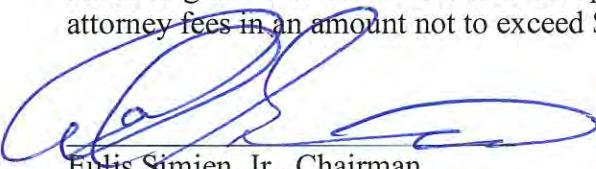
The Commission concludes that the Appointing Authority met his burden of proving a violation of LSP Policy and Procedure No. 901-Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 22 (iii) – Interference. Trooper Jones received a telephone call in which he was advised that his son had been assaulted by Coach Goode. His neighbor drove him to see his son, Chandler, first, and Trooper Jones was able to determine that his son was not seriously injured and safe after the alleged encounter with Coach Goode. After checking on his son, Trooper Jones was driven to Coach Goode's home. Trooper Jones was aware that the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's office had sent deputies to Coach Goode's residence; however, Trooper Jones testified that he wanted to hear Coach Goode's side of the story. Trooper Jones testified that he heard the Sheriff's Deputy read Coach Goode's rights to him. Corporal Cromwell testified that none of the Ouachita Parish Sheriff personnel

invited Trooper Jones to question or speak with Coach Goode and that he intervened in Corporal Cromwell's investigation. Corporal Cromwell testified that Trooper Jones approached Coach Goode and began repeatedly asking Coach Goode whether he put his hands on Trooper Jones' son. Trooper Jones, on the other hand, testified that Corporal Cromwell put his hands up as if to say "What do you want to do?" and Trooper Jones walked between Corporal Cromwell and Coach Goode and began asking Coach Goode, "Did you put your hand on my kid?" After Trooper Jones began questioning Coach Goode, the Ouachita Parish Deputies handcuffed Coach Goode and put him in their vehicle. Although there is conflicting testimony about whether or not the Sheriff's Deputy motioned for Trooper Jones to talk to Coach Goode or not, it is not necessary to resolve this dispute. The Commission finds that Trooper Jones should not have approached Coach Goode nor should he have asked him any questions and invited him to resolve the matter as men and he (Trooper Jones) would not press charges while the matter was being investigated by the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's office.

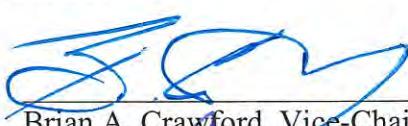
Although the Commission sympathizes with Trooper Jones and the situation he was in as a father of a son who had just been allegedly supplied alcohol and assaulted by his Coach, the Commission finds that Trooper Jones should not have gone to Coach Goode's home to speak with him. Trooper Jones was not on duty, and he was aware that another agency, the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's office, was handling the matter. As such, the factual evidence supports that Trooper Jones violated LSP Policy and Procedure No. 901- Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 22-Interference.

Regarding the discipline that was imposed by the Appointing Authority, a forty (40) hour suspension without pay, Colonel Kevin Reeves testified that he believed the discipline imposed by him was too harsh, and Colonel Reeves asked the Commission to reduce the discipline to a twelve (12) hour suspension without pay.

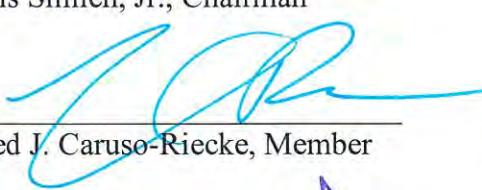
The appeal of Trooper Jones is granted in part and denied in part. The Commission finds there was a violation of only LSP Policy and Procedure Order no. 901-Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 22 (iii) – Interference. The Commission finds that the discipline imposed, a forty (40) hour suspension, was too harsh, and hereby orders that the discipline imposed be reduced to a twelve (12) hour suspension, and that Trooper Jones be reimbursed the difference in pay accordingly. The request for attorney fees by Trooper Jones is granted to the extent that Trooper Jones is to be reimbursed his out of pocket attorney fees in an amount not to exceed \$1,500.00.



Eulis Simien, Jr., Chairman



Brian A. Crawford, Vice-Chairman



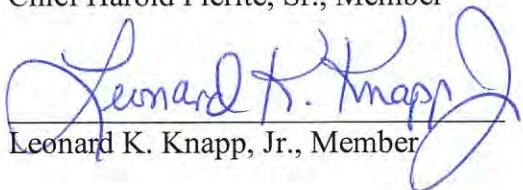
Jared J. Caruso-Riecke, Member



Chief Harold Pierite, Sr., Member



Sgt. Jeffrey C. Foss, Member



Leonard K. Knapp, Jr., Member